



Issues and Concerns

The Water Connection - June 1995

CAP/Groundwater Blending Test Moving Forward

The City of Tucson Water Department is continuing its testing to examine the effects of blending CAP water and groundwater. The study measures the "iron uptake" - the amount of iron (rust) picked up by the water from corroded pipes. In addition, the test determines the amount of new corrosion caused by the water.

CAP water, groundwater, and blends of the two flow through ten separate pipe "loops," each containing a section of old, corroded pipe taken from the City's water distribution system. The pipe sections have been in the ground for at least 40 years and contain a build up of corrosion products known as "scales." Twice a week, the water is removed and tested to measure the iron uptake from the old pipes, and to determine what other changes have occurred in the water chemistry.

Results from the test will provide valuable information about the feasibility of blending CAP and groundwater. The test results will be available in September 1995.

Flushing Program Helps Ensure Quality Water

This summer, the Water Department will be flushing stale water from the distribution system through fire hydrants. While it may seem that we're wasting water at a time when conservation is very important, the flushing is absolutely necessary to eliminate trapped water from the system and ensure safe drinking water. Trucking this water to sites where it could be used would be very costly, requiring the Department to purchase new equipment and add employees. However, we are continuing to look for ways to use the water in a cost-effective manner. Customers in neighborhoods where flushing occurs are notified in advance. All customers received information about the program in their June water bills.

Making Progress:

Main Replacement Program

Two hundred miles of Tucson's old steel and galvanized water mains are being systematically replaced by the Water Department to improve the overall quality of the water it delivers to customers. The ten-year plan to replace the mains began in 1993. Many of these mains were part of older, privately owned water systems that were acquired over the years by the City. Kent McClain, Director of the Tucson Water Department, says a plan to accelerate the current replacement program of 20 miles per year is being considered. Citizens are informed in advance of main replacement construction in their neighborhoods and are invited to attend a public open house to examine plans and get more information on the construction.

Source: City of Tucson, Water Department
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